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I. SOME POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS OF PRES-
BYTERIANISM.

There is about the title of this article a faint and somewhat unpleasant suggestion of the old play upon the words orthodoxy and other-doxo, my doxy and your doxy. Bigoted though the paronomasia may sound, yet the gist of the jest is just; no one would willingly hold aught but the truth, or yet, aught less than the truth; any man's real creed, therefore, must necessarily be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as he sees it; so, then, to a writer sincere in his purpose, and true to his conviction, every conception other than his conception is misconception. If, however, one readily recognizes and candidly confesses his limitations, repudiates all pretence to speak *ex cathedra*, disavowing any individual illumination to see, or any special authority to declare, the truth, perhaps there will be nothing presumptuous in an attempt to set forth, and to set right, what he believes to be certain very prevalent misconceptions of Presbyterianism in the popular mind.

Of course the writer recognizes the fact that Calvinism and Presbyterianism are not synonymous terms; yet as the Presbyterian Church is, more than any other, thoroughly and generally identified with this system of faith, and inasmuch, moreover, as the chief objections obtaining against Presbyterianism are directed against its Calvinistic doctrine, we may be pardoned in an article designed to be popular for using the terms somewhat interchangeably.

Abuse of Calvinism has long been the favorite resort of igno-

and the lower man are contending one against the other. . . . Sin is a relapse," &c. "It is not the things I have done, it is not the things I have undone, which call me to repentance; it is the kind of being I am." It is not strange that one with such views of sin should adopt the Socinian notion of the atonement. The author's discussion of the atonement is calculated to lower the importance of Christ's work, to obscure his divinity and weaken man's sense of the need of a sacrifice. Probably some of the old theologians laid undue emphasis upon the legal and sacrificial element of the atonement, and overlooked too much the moral, vital and dynamic elements, which are now brought more to the front. But it is plain that without the doctrine of Christ's atonement by vicarious sacrifice, there is no system of redemption and no salvation provided for sinners. A religion evolved from a "resident force" in humanity, according to "certain laws," can never be sufficient to redeem a lost, ruined, condemned sinner. Dr. Abbott disclaims a surrender of the essential articles of Christian faith, and uses the old terms inspiration, revelation, sin, redemption, atonement and justification; but as translated in terms of evolutionary philosophy, we do not recognize them as the same.

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BAIRD'S "THE GREAT BAPTIZER."

THE GREAT BAPTIZER. A Bible History of Baptism. *By Samuel J. Baird.* Second Edition. Pp. 489. Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication. 1892.

The first edition of this able treatise was issued from Philadelphia in 1882. At that time it attracted considerable attention and elicited many favorable notices. The ability, the scholarship, and the independence of the treatise at once commended it, and its thoroughness in the treatment of a great subject was highly praised. It is gratifying that a second edition of the work has been issued by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication at Richmond in a style leaving nothing to be desired. In this brief notice no succinct outline of the work before us can be given. Its secondary title—*A Bible History of Baptism*—very properly denotes its method and subject-matter. It is entirely biblical in its nature, and the rite of baptism is traced with great care throughout the sacred Scriptures. Its main title—*The Great Baptizer*—indicates its great central thesis, that Jesus Christ, as the Head of the church, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, is the great source and author of the spiritual baptism of men.

The treatise itself is divided into two books. The first treats of the Old Testament History of Baptism, and the second of its New Testament History. The Old Testament History is presented under six separate heads as follows: The Baptism at Sinai; The Visible Church; Administered Baptisms; Sprinklings; Ritual Self-Washings; Later Traces of the Sprinkled Baptisms; State of the Old Testament Argument. The whole of this discussion is again sub-divided into forty-five sections, so that its treatment is most orderly in its nature, and reference to any part of the elaborate presentation of the subject is easily made.

The New Testament section is divided into eleven parts, with the following titles: Introductory; The Purifyings of the Jews; John's Baptism; Christ's Baptism and Anointing; Christ, the Great Baptizer; The Baptist Argument; Baptismal Regeneration; The New Testament Church; Christian Baptism; The

Family and the Children; Conclusion. This part is further sub-divided also into fifty-six sections, making one hundred and one sections and seventeen chapters in the two books of the treatise. The thorough manner in which the wide field is mapped out renders its survey comparatively easy on the part of the reader.

The following condensed summary will give the reader a bird's-eye-view of the main positions which the author with care and ability seeks to establish.

It is maintained by our author that baptism was not a new ordinance instituted by Christ, but was imposed on Israel at Sinai by God's authority; that there were no immersions under the Levitical law, nor allusions to them anywhere in the Old Testament; that the covenant at Sinai was sealed by the sprinkling of sacrificial blood and water; that those who by defilement were excluded from that covenant were re-admitted by the sprinkling of sacrificial ashes and water, and proselytes were thus received; and that this ordinance is traceable through the entire Old Testament. These points are supported, illustrated and enforced by means of an exhaustive exposition of the passages of the sacred Scriptures which relate to them.

Our author further maintains that three hundred years before Christ, in the Septuagint Greek "baptism" was designated by the new Greek words *baptisma* and *baptismos*, and that it was known by that name in the time of Christ and his apostles; that the prophecies clearly present it as a type of the effusion of the Spirit by the coming Messiah, and that this was especially true of John the forerunner and his baptism; that in the beginning of Christ's ministry, and probably to its close, his disciples, contemporaneously with John, administered *this baptism*; and that Christ's last instructions to his apostles did not institute baptism, but merely admitted Gentiles to its privileges.

Still further, in regard to Christian baptism, our author also argues that it is literally one and the same in form, meaning and office with the sprinkled seal of the Sinai covenant and of the Old Testament history and prophecy; that the history culminates on the day of Pentecost, when the promise of the Father was fulfilled by the affusion upon the apostles of the Holy Ghost; and that, as the Old Testament types and prophecies of purification by affusion all point forward and upward to this outpouring of the Spirit which is to continue until Christ comes again, so Christian baptism points backward and upward to it, as the consummation of grace in the plan of salvation.

All through the discussion of these and other important points, the main thing kept in view is the meaning and mode of baptism. But side by side with these discussions, and especially towards the close of the treatise, there are important conclusions bearing upon the *subjects* of baptism as well. Thus our author maintains that not only in the covenant with Abraham, but especially in the Sinai covenant, when Israel was organized as the visible kingdom of God, the little ones were included in the fold of the covenant, and that under its terms the first instance of distinctively infant baptism presents itself, when 32,000 infants, the captive daughters of Midian, were received into the fold of the covenant at one time, by the sprinkled baptism.

It is further argued by our author that, since it is an undoubted fact that the infants of Israel were included with their parents in the covenant, it is impossible to reconcile the acts, the testimonies and the commands of Jesus in regard to them with the assumption that he intended now to exclude them or to deprive them of

any privileges hitherto enjoyed by them ; and it is shown in this connection that the facts and circumstances of the household baptisms mentioned in the Acts entirely confirm this view, and that Paul expressly asserts the position of infants in language which could, to his readers of that age, mean nothing else than that they were entitled to the privileges of the visible church.

All through this discussion, most thorough exposition is made of all the leading facts and statements relating to baptism in the New Testament, and upon some of the most difficult passages of the Scriptures our author throws light which goes far to remove difficulty, and bring out precious truth of deep spiritual significance.

In regard to the treatise as a whole a few general remarks may be added.

1. It is written in a simple clear style, which makes it easily read. Even when the truths discussed are profound, and the argument subtle, there can be no difficulty for the ordinary reader to follow the author.

2. The discussion has the great merit of being biblical. It is truly a Bible History of Baptism, and our author has taken great pains to go over the entire ground. Even if the reader may not be able to agree with all the interpretations of Scripture given, still the treatise has the great excellence of being professedly grounded on, and of really growing out of, the sacred Scriptures.

3. No one can read this treatise, even hurriedly, without being impressed with the great importance of baptism, and of the profound and vital spiritual truths which it signifies and sets forth. This is a point which perhaps not a few Presbyterians need to regard more than they do at the present day, and this treatise is suited to render an important service in this connection.

4. Whatever difference of opinion there may be in regard to some of the details of the discussion, there can be no difference of opinion in regard to the author's conclusions regarding the mode of baptism. The treatise leaves not a shadow of foundation for the immersionist, and we may wait with patience for his reply.

5. Equally effective, though in a measure subordinate is our author's vindication of the place of infants in the covenant, and of their right to the privileges of the visible church.

6. Our author makes a distinction between the self-washings and the administered baptisms of the Old Testament, which is of importance in this discussion, and which we do not remember to have seen discussed by any previous writer on this subject. This distinction, as set forth by our author, solves some difficulties in a satisfactory way.

7. One of the special excellencies of the treatise is the truly spiritual plane on which it rests. The chapter on "Christ the Great Baptizer," deserves special notice, and merits careful reading in this connection. Due honor is given to the Holy Spirit also.

8. It may be added that there are one or two important positions taken in the treatise which probably will not be approved of by all who read it. One position which some will likely call in question is that there are four sacramental ordinances in the Old Testament—sacrifice, circumcision, passover and baptism. Others will not readily admit that circumcision was the seal of the Abrahamic covenant only, while baptism was the seal of the Sinai covenant. A third position which some will hesitate to admit is, that the visible church was first organized at Sinai. We simply call attention to these points as they are fundamental positions likely to be disputed, but space entirely forbids us now entering into the merits of their dis-

ussion. We know of nothing better that we can do than to commend to our readers a careful perusal of the entire treatise, with the assurance that even while the reader may not agree with all the positions of the author, he will nevertheless not read in vain.

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OTTS'S "FIFTH GOSPEL."

THE FIFTH GOSPEL: The Land Where Jesus Lived. *By J. M. P. Otts, LL. D., Author of Laconisms; The Wisdom of Many in the Words of One; Nicodemus with Jesus.* Fleming H. Revell Co., New York and Chicago. 1892. 12mo., pp. 367. \$1.50.

Whatever may be the shortcomings of American scholars in other departments of biblical learning, it must be conceded that they have made the most notable contributions to the science of sacred geography. Dr. Edward Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, which laid the foundation for all scientific exploration in the East, Lieutenant Lynch's *Expedition to the Dead Sea and the Jordan*, Dr. Thomson's monumental work on *The Land and the Book*, H. J. Van Lennep's *Bible Lands*, Barclay's *City of the Great King*, Bartlett's *From Egypt to Palestine*, Schaff's *Through Bible Lands*, Field's *Among the Holy Hills and On the Desert*, Merrill's *East of the Jordan*, and Trumbull's *Kadesh-Barnea*—not to mention a number of lesser works—all these are products of American scholarship and enterprise. But, as in nearly everything else, so here, the South has lagged somewhat. Quite recently, however, two interesting books on the subject have been published by two gentlemen of our Southern Presbyterian Church, one entitled *The Land of Holy Light*, by the Rev. R. P. Kerr, D. D., and the other entitled *The Fifth Gospel*, by the Rev. J. M. P. Otts, LL. D. They are both well written, but they are quite unlike. The chief interest of the former lies, perhaps, in its descriptions. The chief interest of the latter lies in its discussions. Dr. Otts's purpose is clearly set forth in the following paragraphs taken from different parts of the work.

"This is not a 'book of travels,' though it never could have been written if the author had not travelled in Palestine; for it is the result of the careful reading of the Gospels in the lights and shades of the land where Jesus lived and taught. When so read it is found that the land of Jesus so harmonizes with the four written Gospels, and so unfolds and enlarges their meaning, that it forms around them a Fifth Gospel." (Preface, p. 5.)

"We do not offer our book as, in any sense, a biography of Jesus or a geography of the land in which he lived, but as a number of broken sketches of certain prominent events in his life, and disconnected descriptions of certain localities in the land which throw a special light upon the passages brought under review and into discussion. Thus, it is the aim of the author, not by a complete description of the whole land, but by a delineation of its characteristic features, to place under the eye of the reader a pen-picture, so far as his words can paint it, of the present aspect of the land where Jesus lived, and to contrast that picture with what must have been its general appearance in his day, and to connect therewith careful studies of certain typical and exponential passages in his life, the true and inner meaning of which is unfolded and elucidated by the scenes and circumstances under which they occurred." (Preface, pp. 6-7.)

"The land where Jesus lived stands to these four [canonical] Gospels as a Fifth